



September 11th Day of Service and Remembrance Talking Points

- In response to the tragic events of September 11, 2001, Americans and global citizens joined together under a remarkable spirit of service and compassion that inspired and helped heal the nation.
- In immediate response to the attacks in New York City, Washington D.C., and Shanksville, Pennsylvania, firefighters, police officers, emergency medical technicians, physicians, nurses, military personnel, and other first responders immediately and without concern for their own well-being rose to service, in a heroic attempt to protect the lives of those still at risk, consequently saving thousands of men and women.
- In the days, weeks, and months following the attacks, thousands of people in the United States and other nations spontaneously volunteered to help support the rescue and recovery efforts, braving both physical and emotional hardship.
- Hundreds of thousands of brave men and women continue to serve every day, having answered the call to duty as members of our nation's armed forces with thousands having given their lives, or been injured to defend our nation's security and prevent future terrorist attacks.
- In the years immediately following the September 11, 2001, attacks, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics documented a marked increase in volunteerism among citizens in the United States.
- Currently hundreds of thousands of people in the United States and 170 different countries already observe the anniversary of the September 11, 2001 attacks each year by personally engaging in service, good deeds, and other charitable acts. For years, families of 9/11 victims, survivors, first responders, rescue and recovery workers, and volunteers called for legislation to formally authorize the establishment of September 11 as an annually recognized national day of service.
- This past April, President Obama signed the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, which among other provisions, officially recognized September 11 as a National Day of Service and Remembrance. September 11 is an opportunity to serve in honor of the sacrifices made eight years ago and to pledge continued service to the nation.
- On September 11, Americans will join together in service activities organized by a broad and diverse group of national non profits, their local affiliates, small service organizations and individuals across all fifty states. The day is being led by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), CNCS State Offices and State Service Commissions.
- This September 11 marks the culmination of the summer phase of *United We Serve* and a transition to a sustained, collaborative, and focused effort to meet community needs and

make service a way of life for all Americans. The President will ask Americans to pledge continued service going forward.

- *United We Serve* is President's Obama's call to service challenging all Americans to engage in meaningful service to meet growing social needs resulting from the economic downturn. Confident that ordinary people can achieve extraordinary things when given the proper tools, President Obama is asking us to come together to help lay a new foundation for growth.
- The initiative, led by the Corporation for National and Community Service, aims to both expand the impact of existing organizations by engaging new volunteers in their work and encourage volunteers to develop their own "do-it-yourself" projects with friends, family, and neighbors.
- Since the launch of *United We Serve* in June, Americans from all walks of life have responded enthusiastically to the President's call to service. By joining with their friends and neighbors, they have replenished food banks, prevented summer reading loss, provided health services, supported our veterans and military families, restored parks and public lands, and given back in countless other ways.
- Americans face tough challenges – 37 million Americans live in poverty, half of the students in our 50 biggest cities don't graduate, 15 million kids need mentors, and the economic downturn puts more people and communities at risk.
- Service is a powerful and effective way to address many of these challenges. The most effective intervention in a troubled child's life is a mentor; tutors help children read and graduate from high school; and volunteers help reduce violence, restore hope after disasters, and much more.
- Each year more than 61 million Americans volunteer in our communities, providing vital support to our schools and shelters, hospitals and hotlines, and other neighborhood efforts. But to meet our nation's challenges we need more Americans to mentor and tutor at-risk-youth, care for seniors, respond to disasters, support veterans and military families and meet other social needs.
- The purpose of *United We Serve* is three-fold: (1) To bolster civic engagement nationwide. (2) To better our communities in priority issue areas – health, energy and environment, education, community renewal, and safety and security (ie supporting veterans and military families and preparing for disasters). (3) To develop lasting partnerships with nonprofits, faith based groups, issue groups, educational institutions, businesses, foundations, and all levels of government.
- To make it easier for Americans to get involved, the President is urging Americans to visit Serve.gov, a website managed by the Corporation for National and Community Service. Visitors to Serve.gov can type in their zip code to find local volunteer opportunities, recruit volunteers by posting their organization's projects or get ideas for creating their own projects with friends, families and neighbors.
- There are as many ways to join *United We Serve* as there are needs in our communities. If you're already doing service, post your opportunities or share your story at Serve.gov so others can join your efforts. If you're new to service, search for volunteer opportunities in

your area or download one of the easy-to-use toolkits at [Serve.gov](https://www.serve.gov) and develop your own project with friends, family, and neighbors.